

June 19, 2001

The Honorable John D. Dingell
Ranking Member, Energy and Commerce Committee
United States House of Representatives
2322 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dingell:

The Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) is pleased to endorse H.R. 526, the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001. We appreciate your diligent work in drafting a bipartisan bill with many very important provisions, and we have been working with our grassroots members to encourage them to contact their member of Congress.

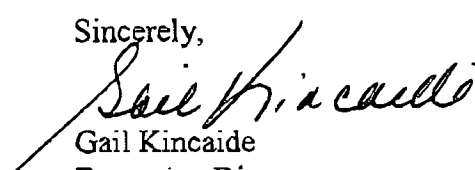
AWHONN is an organization of 22,000 nurses whose mission is to promote the health of women and newborns. We believe that this legislation, as written, provides consumers with vital protections necessary for the provision of safe, quality health care coverage. Nurses are engaged in the daily care of patients and can see the direct impact that managed care has on their patient's health care choices.

We are particularly pleased with the following provisions included in the bill that:

- 1) Provide direct access to a participating health care provider who specializes in obstetrics and gynecology.
- 2) Prohibit discrimination against providers based on licensure.
- 3) Include continuity of care for patients who are undergoing a course of treatment (including pregnancy) when their employer switches health plans.
- 4) Protect health care providers who report quality problems; and
- 5) Include of the 161 million Americans with private health insurance.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue and we look forward to working with you on the passage of H.R. 526. Please contact Lisa M. Greenhill, legislative manager, if you need any additional information. She can be reached at (202) 261-2405 or lisag@awhonn.org.

Sincerely,


Gail Kincaide
Executive Director